

# Connections

November 2009

## Amendment 3 Milestone Highlights Employees' Hard Work

by Sally Oxenhandler

MoDOT reached another Amendment 3 milestone in October by selling the last of the bonds authorized by the constitutional amendment voters passed in November 2004. Amendment 3 redirected some highway user fees to road and bridge projects, and enabled us to undertake our Smoother, Safer, Sooner initiative.

“Every single MoDOT employee is responsible for the success of Smoother, Safer, Sooner and the incredible amount of road and bridge work it made possible,” said Chief Financial Officer Roberta Broeker. “That hard work has contributed to a dramatic improvement in the condition of our roads and a significant decrease in highway fatalities.”

The additional funding from Amendment 3 has enabled MoDOT to tackle such major projects as the rebuilding of Interstate 64 in St. Louis, the reconstruction of about five miles of interstate near downtown Kansas City known as the kcICON project and the Smooth Roads Initiative, which improved 2,200 miles of the state’s busiest highways in 2005 and 2006.

“Eighty-three percent of Missouri’s major highways are in good condition, compared



to 47 percent in 2004,” Director Pete Rahn said. “More importantly, we’ve experienced a 24 percent decrease in highway deaths in the past three years. That means more of our loved ones are arriving alive.”

The amendment required MoDOT to sell bonds to leverage the additional funding the agency received, rather than using the proceeds on a pay-as-you-go basis. In addition to giving the 2,200 miles of major highways included in the Smooth Roads Initiative new pavement, wider, more reflective stripes, rumble strips and brighter signs, the department began work on 55 projects that otherwise wouldn’t have been addressed for several years and started 97 brand new projects. The 55 ac-

celerated projects are complete. Seventy-four of the new major projects are under way, with 23 still to be bid.

While the additional financing has helped us keep our roads and bridges from total deterioration, it’s not the long-term solution. Even with the extra money MoDOT received from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the state is facing a huge drop in the amount of funding available for transportation in future years. The construction boom we’ve enjoyed these past few years is about to come to a screeching halt.

Federal and state funding for transportation comes mainly from fuel taxes, automobile sales tax and motor vehicle and licensing fees. The sluggish economy has hurt new car sales and last year’s spike in gasoline prices caused people to drive less and buy more fuel-efficient cars. As a re-

sult, state revenue from taxes and fees in fiscal year 2009 was down 4.9 percent, or \$52 million, compared to fiscal year 2008. Compounding the problem is the future of the federal highway bill, which is up in

the air as Congress and the administration debate a plan of action.

“We’ve had a good ride, but we won’t be able to maintain the momentum we’ve gained unless we identify new sources of revenue for transportation,” Director Rahn said.



## Mentoring for Success

by Laura Holloway

It was Marlon Stayton’s first week on the job, and like all new employees, he was learning the MoDOT ropes in employee orientation. Coming from the private sector, Stayton could tell that working for the state was going to offer both unique opportunities and challenges. A particular program discussed during orientation seemed to present the solution to success.

“The mentoring program helped accelerate me in getting used to the state environment. My mentor is a great resource in discussing the culture and history of



IS Project Manager Marlon Stayton meets with District 5 Human Resources Manager Dawn Klinger. The two are participants in MoDOT’s mentoring program.

MoDOT,” said Stayton, a project manager with the Information Systems Division.

Elizabeth Reed, senior human resources specialist with the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Division, was able to present the advantages to Stayton during employee orientation and assisted with coordinating his match with Dawn Klinger as a mentor. Klinger is the human resources manager with District 5 and has provided helpful insights to Stayton regarding MAPS, training opportunities, MoDOT values and its mission.

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# Recognizing Achievement

by Mike Holloway

The Performance-Based Pay Program was implemented for its second year in July 2009. Performance-based pay recognizes individual performance and achievement with temporary annual salary increases. It joins the the department's other total rewards programs, including the Equity Increase Program, Career Ladder Promotion Program, Performance Plus and Safety Pays Programs, Solutions at Work, Employee Recognition Program, Service Awards Programs, and the various Challenge Programs (Chip Seal, Tool & Equipment, Practical Design).

Information about the process, its purpose, eligibility criteria, factors to consider in determining who is to receive a temporary increase, and other information is available at: <http://wwwi/intranet/hr/documents/Performance-BasedPayProgramDetail.pdf>.

District engineers and division leaders had discretion in deciding how recipients were selected. A flowchart summarizing the suggested steps and

prioritization factors is available at: <http://wwwi/intranet/hr/documents/DecisionProcessFlowchart.pdf>.

- Here is a summary of the results:
- There were 1,164 recipients statewide, representing 18 percent of authorized FTEs.
  - \$1,542,288 was spent out of \$1.7 million allocated to the program.
  - 83 percent of recipients were in salary grade 16 and below.
  - 69 percent of recipients were non-supervisors.
  - 63 percent of recipients were field employees (74 percent in the districts).
  - 82 percent of recipients were below the midpoint step for their salary grade (step 10).
  - 90 percent of recipients were at the top of their current career ladder or had no ladder.

If you have any questions about this program, please contact Mike Holloway at (573) 751-2339.

## Missourians Still Below National Seat Belt Average

Nearly 23 percent of Missouri motorists are still not wearing their seat belts, according to a recently released statewide survey. Only 77 percent of Missourians buckle up regularly, seven percent less than the national average of 84 percent. Usage is up just one percentage point from last year, when the survey showed 76 percent of Missourians wearing seat belts.

“Missouri is seven points lower than the national seat belt use average,” says Leanna Depue, chair of the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety’s executive committee. “Unfortunately, our number has only gone up one percentage point, which doesn’t show any real improvement; and it’s not likely to improve significantly without a primary safety belt law. We could save so many lives just by making our seat belt law a primary law.”

In 2008, 489 people killed in Missouri traffic crashes weren’t wearing a seat belt.

Wearing a seat belt is your best defense in a crash -- it provides protection from being ejected and keeps motorists from smashing into windshields, dashboards and other passengers.

Southwest Missouri has an even bigger problem with motorists failing to wear seat belts. The 10-county area near Joplin and Springfield has a 66 percent usage rate, 11 percent lower than the state average and 18 percent below the national average. In 2008, 102 people died in traffic crashes in those 10 counties; 62 of them were not wearing a seat belt.

To help get more people to buckle up in this area, MoDOT joined with local law enforcement to kick off a pilot project in southwest Missouri to crack down on unbuckled motorists during October. A coordinating advertising campaign sent a strong message about the benefits of wearing a seat belt and the consequences of not buckling up.

The 10 southwest counties included in this special Click It or Ticket enforcement effort included: Jasper, Newton, McDonald, Lawrence, Barry, Greene, Christian, Taney, Stone and Webster.

“Every day someone in Missouri dies in a crash because they weren’t buckled up,” Depue says. “Buckling up is so easy, but provides so much protection. Please buckle up and Arrive Alive.”

For more information, visit [www.saveMOLives.com](http://www.saveMOLives.com).

## Keep Your Cool and Arrive Alive

### Five Things to Know About Safe Winter Travel

Driving safely takes on new meaning when snow and ice are involved. Winter weather makes for abnormal driving conditions, which means a greater possibility for crashes and injuries. In 2008, 30 people were killed, 322 seriously injured and 2,536 received minor injuries in Missouri traffic crashes when there was snow, ice or slush on the roadway. Here are five things to share with your friends and neighbors to keep them safe during winter travel:

- 1. Prepare before you go.** For information on road conditions across the state and more safe traveling tips, visit [www.modot.org](http://www.modot.org) or call 1-888 ASK MODOT. Recorded road condition information is available at (800) 222-6400.
- 2. Buckle up.** Before you even leave your driveway, fasten your seat belt and

insist everyone in your vehicle buckle up. In a crash, you have a better chance to Arrive Alive if you are buckled up.

**3. Drive correctly for the conditions.** Remember, in Ice and Snow, Take It Slow — slower speed, slower acceleration, slower steering, and slower braking. Driving is most dangerous when temperatures are near 32 degrees.

**4. Don’t crowd the plow.** Give snowplows plenty of room to work, remember not to tailgate and try not to pass.

**5. Pay attention.** In 2008, inattention and driving too fast for conditions were the top two contributing factors in traffic crashes during the winter months. Slow down and allow additional room between your vehicle and others.



## New Interactive Map Shows ARRA Projects Managed by MoDOT

by Matt Hiebert

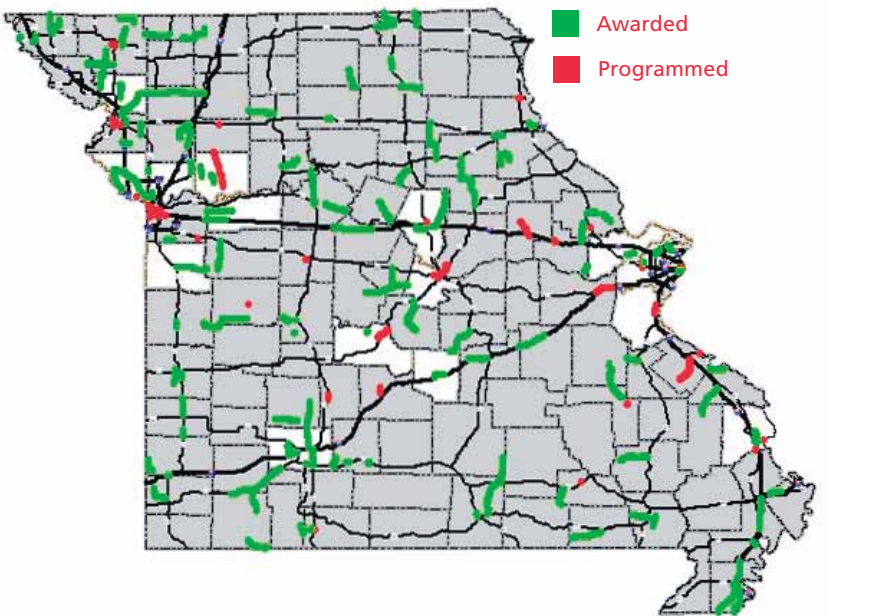
The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act injected millions of dollars into Missouri’s transportation system. Dozens of projects have been launched or accelerated with the help of these funds.

MoDOT keeps the citizens of Missouri updated on the progress of these projects online at [www.modot.org/arra](http://www.modot.org/arra). Recently a new addition to the Web site makes it even easier for visitors to get a snapshot of the breadth and progress of each project overseen by the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission.

view both programmed and awarded projects run by MoDOT. Green and red lines show the location and length of each work zone. When visitors double click on one of the colored lines, a pop-up box appears that describes the projects and shows funding information.

The map is Flash-based, so you will need the latest version of Flash player and an up-to-date browser to benefit from all of its features. If you still have trouble, the same information is available on the ARRA site in other formats.

A new interactive map allows visitors to





# Don't Be a Loser This Holiday Season

by Sandra Hentges

Tipsy, merry, sauced, snookered, jazzed, goosed ... whatever word you use, if you drink and drive this holiday season ... you lose.

“It’s not just a slogan, it’s a fact,” says Leanna Depue, director of MoDOT’s Highway Safety Division. “Whether it is your license, your money or your life -- You Drink and Drive. You Lose.”

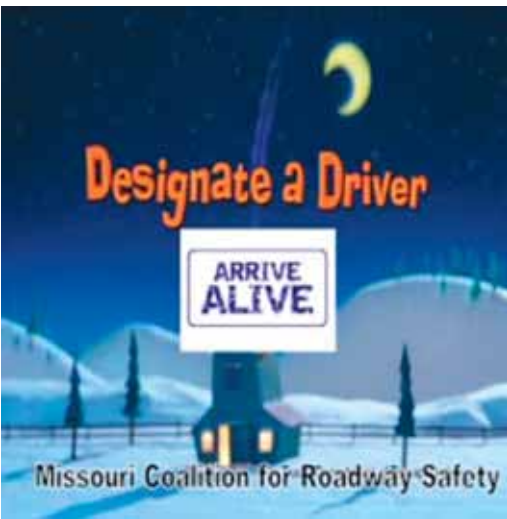
The days between Thanksgiving and Christmas are usually filled with lots of holiday cheer. Unfortunately, it can also be a very dangerous time on Missouri roads. In 2008, between the two holidays, 77 people died in alcohol-related traffic crashes in Missouri and 4,550 were injured.

Through an advertising campaign that runs Nov. 23-Dec. 20, the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety is urging

drivers not to drink, or to call a cab or designate a driver. As always, law enforcement officers will be on the lookout for anyone driving impaired.

Even if you are not involved in a crash, consider the consequences if you are caught driving while intoxicated: you could have your license suspended, or even lose it, incur thousands of dollars in fines, and end up serving jail time.

“Don’t be a ‘loser’ this holiday season,” Depue says. “If you’re drinking, just



don’t drive. We want everyone to Arrive Alive.”

To learn more about impaired driving or other safety programs, visit [saveMOLives.com](http://saveMOLives.com).

## The Consequences of Drinking and Driving

Even if you are not killed or injured in a crash, consider the consequences if you are caught driving while intoxicated:

- For the first conviction (or first conviction in over five years), your license will be suspended for 30 days followed by a 60-day suspension if a hardship license is not obtained.

- A second conviction results in a \$1,000 fine, a year-long revocation of your license and up to a year in jail. You will also be required to install an ignition interlock system on your vehicle, preventing your car from starting when you have alcohol on your breath.
- Third and subsequent convictions can be penalized with up to a \$5,000 fine, a 10-year license denial, and/or up to seven years in jail.

- If you cause a fatal crash while intoxicated, you could be charged with involuntary manslaughter, a felony resulting in up to seven years of jail time, a \$5,000 fine or both.
- Insurance coverage will be difficult to find and the rates will be significantly higher.

It’s not just a slogan, it’s a fact. You Drink and Drive. You Lose.

# MoDOT Selling Property in Statewide Blitz

MoDOT is trying a new tactic to sell property it no longer needs.

A statewide blitz this month is an all-out attempt to sell multiple properties across the state in a short period of time. Under its Realty to Roads program, MoDOT has identified about 23 highly marketable properties to sell either at auction or by sealed bid from Nov. 16-20.

“Our goal is to sell a fairly large number of properties in a concentrated amount

of time,” said Gregory Wood, Realty to Roads Project Director in MoDOT’s Right of Way Division. “We want to draw attention to the fact we have property for sale and get land we’re no longer using in the hands of owners who can put it to good use. Of benefit to everyone is the fact that the money from the sales goes to fund needed road and bridge projects.”

MoDOT’s district offices will handle the property sales for the land in their respective regions. Wood said the par-

cells could be developed independently or assembled with adjoining properties.

“Some people buy our properties to add to adjoining land they already own or they may purchase a property for new development,” Wood said. “We’ve also seen some unique uses, such as dog parks.”

Wood said the blitz complements other activities MoDOT has implemented to aggressively sell excess property. As part of the Realty to Roads initia-

# Tour of Missouri Wins Again!

by Sue Cox

After seven days of exciting competition, the third annual Tour of Missouri crossed the finish line in Kansas City Sept. 13, claiming a victory for the state of Missouri, for professional cycling and for MoDOT.

“I am very pleased that for the state’s investment of \$1.5 million in the Tour of Missouri, we were able to return over \$38 million to communities in our state,” said Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder.

Throughout the week, an estimated 500,000 spectators watched 120 cyclists representing 23 countries race through many Missouri communities along the 612-mile race route.

The economic impact by spectators was an increase from previous years -- \$29.8 million in 2008 and \$26.2 million in 2007. IFM Sports, a sports marketing and research company in St. Louis, provided the data through an economic impact study of the race.

During the event, the average out-of-state visitor spent more than \$220 per day. In planning their trip, 83 percent of non-Missourians said the Tour of Missouri was the reason they came to spend time in Missouri. The average out-of-state visitor spent more than four days in the Show-Me State.

# When All Else Fails, Turn to the Red Shirts

by Matt Hiebert



By now many divisions have been upgraded to Next Generation Desktop. You’ve trained online, maybe gone to a class or two and used the Microsoft

Interactive Training, but you still can’t figure out something.

That’s where the Red Shirt Team can help.

Within your division someone has been identified as a Red Shirt Team member. Although they are not software “trainers,” these individuals can probably help you with figuring out a problem in Windows 7, Microsoft Office 2007 or SharePoint. If they can’t figure it out, they’ll know who to call.

They don’t know every detail of every program, but they are the next line of

help when it comes to this massive technological change in your work life. They just might have already encountered the problem you’re having and know how to fix it.

Make sure you know who the Red Shirt Team members are in your division. If you hit an impasse and just can’t find a command or figure out how to do a task, call them over to your desktop. If you’re having this problem, it may mean others are, too.

For Your Benefit

Cafeteria Plan – Choose Your Benefit

It’s that time of year again. Have you planned your cafeteria plan expenses?

Amy Niederhelm, governmental relations specialist, makes sure to participate, and has seen the tax-saving benefits each year. She and her husband Sam Niederhelm, project reviewer with Central Office Design division, use the tax-saving program for dental expenses, eye care exams and medical expenses.

The cafeteria plan allows participants to save 25 percent or more on qualified expenses, allowing users to set aside tax-free money to pay for items such

as state-sponsored health insurance premiums, dental and vision insurance premiums, eligible out-of-pocket health care expenses, and/or dependent care.

The Niederhelms plan to start taking advantage of the dependent-care benefit for their three-year-old son, Peyton.

“The cafeteria plan has been a great benefit to us, and the process is easy and fast,” said Amy.

The cafeteria plan’s open enrollment period for active employees runs through Dec. 1, 2009 for paper enrollment. If enrolling online, the deadline is Dec. 15, 2009. To learn more about

the cafeteria plan, go to [www.mocafe.com](http://www.mocafe.com) or call 1-800-659-3035.

**Medical Plan Changes Rate Changes for Spouse Contribution Category**

For many years, MoDOT and Missouri State Highway Patrol Medical and Life Insurance Plan offered coverage at no, or a very low, premium cost to active employees or retirees whose spouse is also an employee or retiree of MoDOT/MSHP and is enrolled as a dependent in the plan.

Members of this “spouse-contribution” rate category will see a rate increase for their 2010 benefits. In the past, the calculation for the final out-of-pocket rates provided either a duplicate or enhanced employer contribution for the spouse. To provide the best value for every taxpayer dollar, the calculation has been revised effective Jan. 1, 2010.

The new rates are published in the 2010 Benefit Update that was mailed to each employee’s home in October. For more information, please visit <http://www.modot.mo.gov/newsandinfo/documents/2010MedicalRateChart.pdf>.

We Salute Our Brave MoDOT Veterans



Mentoring for Success

from page 1

Klinger benefits from the partnership as well.

“I learned a lot from Marlon. Working in human resources, it was very valuable for me to talk with him about the perspective of a new employee, from his application process to becoming established in his position,” said Klinger.

Reed sees the program as valuable to any level or stage of employment at MoDOT.

“Mentoring can be for new employees wanting to learn about the department and what it takes to be successful, or for those who have worked at MoDOT for awhile and want assistance in their career development,” said Reed.

Current participants span districts and divisions and include field employees to office personnel. The mentoring program is available, and can be beneficial, to all MoDOT employees.

Still wondering if the mentoring program is right for you?

“Studies have shown that people who work their way up the ladder and are successful have been mentored. It’s an important factor to individual success,” said Klinger.

For more information or to participate in the program, contact Reed at (573) 522-5333 or [Elizabeth.Reed@modot.mo.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Reed@modot.mo.gov).

November Service Anniversaries

4	<b>35 Years</b>			Lynette Miller	D8
	Tim L. Rice	D7		Larry D. Hurt	D9
	<b>30 Years</b>			Janice F. Simpher	D10
	Gary E. Dreher	D1		Nancy L. Abbott	CO
	Jerry L. Steele	D2		Michael E. Henderson	CO
	James S. Cockrell	D3		Kevin A. Jaegers	CO
	William G. Arney	D6		Melinda S. Stumpe	CO
				Shi-Ning Wen	CO
	<b>25 Years</b>			<b>10 Years</b>	
	Patricia S. Bates	D5		Jason A. Brown	D1
	Toby E. McHaffie	D8		Archie R. Gandy	D2
	Jerry L. Van Wyk	D8		David M. McGoldrick	D2
	Jon M. Knight	D8		Clinton D. Jones	D5
	Charles D. Schroyer	D9		Julie A. Batusic	D5
	James T. Sanders	D10		Jerome C. Haberberger	D6
	Randolph L. Ross	D10		Maurice D. Neil	D6
	Linda K. Webb	CO		Carrie L. Kooman	D6
	Steven W. Coker	CO		Lawrence Parks	D6
	<b>20 Years</b>			Melena A. Hohlt	D6
	Regana D. Walker	D2		David B. Washington	D6
	James M. Blanchard	D2		Tara L. Starns	D6
	John D. Vandelight	D5		Kenneth R. Shallenburger	D7
	Ricky L. Simmons	D5		Sheila G. Denmark	D7
	Johnna A. Teel	D8		Bobetta Jeffries	D7
	John L. Becker	D9		Mark D. Hester	D9
	Kim D. Smith	D10		David A. Sims	D10
	Jimmy D. Trout	D10		Gary N. Adams	D10
	Virginia M. Brown	CO		Keith J. Ferrell	CO
	<b>15 Years</b>			Megan L. Waters-Hamblin	CO
	Wesley K. Moore	D1		Sunshine E. Wilde	CO
	Matthew W. Elsea	D4		Joseph C. Martin	CO
	Robert L. Anderson	D7		Jeremy M. Kampeter	CO
	Jeanie G. Helm	D7		<b>5 Years</b>	
	Larry D. Jeffreys	D8		Danny C. Woody	D1
				Tim F. Scott	D2

James R. Vogelsmeier	D2	Chad S. Felter	D10
Tate A. Tuley	D3	Dean A. Wethington	D10
John T. Arnold	D4	Steff D. Copeland	CO
Gerri A. Doyle	D4	Matthew L. Freeman	CO
Brian L. Huffner	D4	Clay A. Hilsabeck	CO
Richard D. Skelton	D5	Dimitrios Rigos	CO
Dawn N. Klinger	D5	Brenda J. Tyree	CO
John P. Carron	D6	Thomas F. Wilkerson	CO
Jerry L. Burns	D7		
Bradley J. Hendrix	D8		
Chad D. King	D8		
Casey S. Johnson	D8		
Bradley T. Richter	D8		
Bradley A. Leonard	D8		
Roy A. Milbauer	D8		
Matthew D. Wilkerson	D10		
Michael W. Terry	D10		

September Retirements		
Name	Location	Years of Service
Roger Renshaw	D1	31
Gary Wilson	D1	25
Danny Brennan	D3	37
Roger Steinman	D3	42
Thomas Bates	D4	25
Gregory Chapman	D4	31
Steven Courtney	D4	27
Billy Glazier	D4	26
Donald Huff	D4	15
Patrick Davis	D5	24
Richard Burns	D6	27
Gerald Coleman	D6	30
Bradley Hartman	D6	30
Virginia Hunt	D6	21
Ann Warhol	D6	20
Francis Abramovitz	D7	13
Bennie Foltz	D8	33
David Whitlock	D8	20
Jack Wilson	D8	31
Michael Clements	D9	30
Joyce Trabue	CO	24
Mary Jane Stratman	CO	15





# MoDOT's Communications Efforts Awarded

by Sally Oxenhandler

MoDOT's efforts to have the first recovery act project in the nation under way within minutes of the president signing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act earned MoDOT two awards at AASHTO's National Transportation Public Affairs Workshop, held Oct. 11-14 in St. Louis. MoDOT stepped in to host the event after the original host state, Louisiana, had to cancel due to budget constraints.

The first-in-the nation project won the best of show in the Transportation Events and News Release categories. In addition, MoDOT won the best Public Involvement Approach award for hosting the department's first-ever electronic meeting to meaningfully and cost-effectively inform the public about the need to rebuild I-70 and to introduce the concept of truck-only lanes.

The effort was supplemented by news

releases, advertising and a dedicated Web site.

The contest is considered the premier communications competition in the transportation industry, and the awards have become a standard of public relations excellence among state departments of transportation.

Another award came Community Relations' way when the Mid-Missouri Chapter of the Public Relations Society honored CR Director Shane Peck with its Gold Anvil Award for Individual Excellence at its fall meeting held Oct. 16 in Columbia. The award honors public relations practitioners who excel in their professional field of public and media relations.

The PRSA chapter also recognized MoDOT's communications efforts on the New I-64 project in St. Louis in the issues/crisis management category.



Shaun Schmitz

Community Relations Director Shane Peck presents Outreach Coordinator Bob Brendel with an award for best public involvement approach at the National Transportation Public Affairs Workshop. The award recognized MoDOT's first-ever virtual public meeting focusing on the need to rebuild I-70.

## Teaming Up for Charity



On Oct. 8, the day of the Mizzou vs. Nebraska football game, a group of Motor Carrier Services employees supported two causes - their team and the Missouri State Employees Charitable Campaign. In exchange for a donation to the charitable campaign, MCS folks could wear team attire to work. Co-workers and visiting customers enjoyed razzing the only Husker fan in the group.

### for more info

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## IS Interns Help MoDOT Statewide

Over the past summer, 11 interns in the Information Systems division have helped provide customer service and complete projects for partners. IS began working in February 2009 to find the right interns. Supervisors visited colleges with Human Resources and searched for students who had skills of value to MoDOT.

IS interns assisted with loading operating systems, delivered and

installed servers statewide, resolved programming problems, assisted with the inventory and assessments of our wireless installation at the maintenance facilities across the state and provided documentation to help with future decision making.

We appreciate all they have done to assist MoDOT.



Information Systems staff and interns from left to right, back row: Les Fennwald, Information Systems Supervisor; Jack Morris, Information Systems Manager; Dennis Finke, Information Systems Supervisor; John Voss, Intern; Mike Miller, Information Systems Director; Fred Arthur, Intern; Drew Clardy, Intern; Rick Penrose, Human Resources Services Manager; Madalynn Bell, Information Systems Supervisor. Left to right, front row: Lois Fairchild, Senior Human Resources Specialist; Dianna Silvester, Information Systems Supervisor; Daniel West, Intern; Josh Odom, Intern; Dannon Abney, Intern; Dustin Schanzmeyer, Intern; Mike Witt, Intern.



D1

Northwest

Last Month in the Northwest District

by M. Elaine Justus



Lana Allen

Construction Project Office Assistant Lana Allen took this photograph at the finish line in St. Joseph.

September started off with a madness of pedaling when the Tour of Missouri came to our district on the 12th. Like other impacted districts, it was a challenge to make sure everything was ready and the rolling closures went smoothly. Senior Traffic Studies Specialist Chris Cole deserves a large part of the credit for the trouble-free event.

out to be sunny and very nice. It was a great opportunity to sit down with people you might not get to see very often in your regular work day. The local cablevision station took the time to come down and interview our people about the importance and necessity of this annual training.

Sept. 21 marked the beginning of the week-long Winter Skills Assessment training for the Northwest District. Except for the first day of the event (which was a deluge of Biblical proportion), the rest of the week turned



Cathy Morrison



Cathy Morrison

Besides the performance part of the Winter Skills assessment, there was also the written portion to make sure everyone understood the “why” of how things are done. Maintenance Superintendent Charlie Roach, Senior Traffic Specialist Terry Glidewell and Senior Traffic Technician Steve Willis compare notes.

for more info

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St. Joseph, MO 64502



Cathy Morrison

Maintenance Superintendent Keith Hoover and Area Engineer Tonya Lohman participate in the Winter Skills Assessment.



Cathy Morrison

Senior Maintenance Worker C.J. Bowman took a few minutes to study up before taking the written portion of the Winter Skills Assessment.



Cathy Morrison

The event provided a great backdrop for District Engineer Don Wichern to do an interview with Derek Davis of KQTV.

Keeping Children Safe

by M. Elaine Justus



Connie Hale

To celebrate Child Safety Week, a free inspection was offered on Sept. 17 at the parking lot of the East Hills Mall. Construction Project Office Assistant Lana Allen and Safety Office Assistant Amber Dydell were both there to help out. Lana is already a certified child safety seat technician, and Amber will be taking the intensive three-day course to achieve her certification later this fall. This program remains an important part of the Blueprint Coalitions’ efforts to reduce the number of fatalities on state highways.



Connie Hale

It doesn’t matter how important we thought it was that his seat was safe, this little guy found the whole thing boring.



# D2

## North Central



On Oct. 16 the citizens of Glasgow certainly had something to celebrate, the opening of the Missouri River Bridge. The citizens, along with federal, state and local officials and special

opening and celebration of the bridge in 1925.

Just over one year ago, this structure was the worst condition major river bridge in the system.



The new modern bridge.

VIP guests, celebrated the completion of this \$15 million dollar investment to their community and to the state.

Prior to the ceremony the nearly 200 attendees were entertained by the Glasgow Marching Band and lead in the

citizens of Glasgow and the surrounding communities, the project gained support from local city and county officials, industry and business leaders, area citizens, and state and federal legislators.



Missouri's Senior Senator, Kit Bond talked about the importance of transportation to the state.

pledge of allegiance by the VFW and American Legion, and in an opening invocation by Pastor Jim Crooks.

As Master of Ceremonies, Assistant District Engineer Kevin James welcomed the crowd and gave recognition to some very special guests, nine individuals who had attended the first

David Gach, MoDOT Chief Financial Officer Roberta Broeker, Pastors Don White and Jim Crooks.

Senator Kit Bond commented, "Our generation must have the foresight to invest in the infrastructure that our children and grandchildren will be using for their lives, that is why I have

The solution was a partial replacement, which would extend the life of the bridge for up to 50 years. Of course the innovative solution came with one major side effect, closing the bridge for an entire year during the construction.

Although a closure of this duration would be a very inconvenient to the

The end result, a new modern safe bridge, was certainly something to celebrate.

The list of those participating in the ceremony: Senator Kit Bond, Senator Bill Stouffer, Representatives Paul Quinn and Joe Aull, Naomi Boss for Congressman Sam Graves, Presiding County Commissioners Lowell Eaton and Becky Plattner, Mayor Fred Foley, Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission Chairman



Mayor Fred Foley was given the honor of cutting the ceremonial ribbon, assisted by Senator Stouffer (left) and Senator Bond (right).

made highway funding a priority." Some very common themes rang from the participant's comments. Being thankful for the new bridge and for the ferry service, using taxpayer dollars wisely with the innovative design, thanking citizens for sacrifices made

closure. The service allowed citizens a viable transportation solution, and was well received. Of the 415 days in service, the ferry was not operational only 22 days due to high water from flooding or ice on the river, and averaged 250 vehicles per day and 3,000 passengers per week.



The ferry service served the community well.

during the closure, and for the community working together with MoDOT and the elected officials towards this common goal.

Someone who has been an integral part of this project, but unable to join the celebration, sent his comments by letter. ... "Without the leadership, determination and efforts of the all of the individuals who spoke here today, this project would not exist. It started as a simple idea to address a critical problem that evolved in to one of the best examples of "Practical Design" in the state... I want to congratulate all of you on being a part of this innovative project to improve your community." Lieutenant Commander Daniel Niec, PE, CEC, USN, Current Operations Officer, Ninth Naval Construction Regiment.

A major part of this project was the operation of the ferry service during the

"I thought the ferry worked out tremendously well, they became part of the community and you guys really took them in..." "We've got something here to really be proud of," said Senator Bill Stouffer.

Just prior to the closing ceremonial ribbon cutting, Kevin James thanked all of those who came together to make this project a success:

- Citizens and businesses of Glasgow and the surrounding communities
- City of Glasgow
- Glasgow Alternative Transportation Committee
- Howard and Saline County Commissions
- Federal and State Legislators
- Glasgow Historical Society
- HDR, Inc.
- Jensen Construction Company
- Calhoun Ferry Company
- MoDOT Staff

"We appreciate the support and patience of everyone during this past year, and we thank all of our speakers for being here today, and to all of you for participating in this celebration," said James.

Citizens can now enjoy a modern, safe bridge for years to come.

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## Deja vu



The Missouri River Bridge at Miami closed to traffic on Oct. 5. The \$14.8 million dollar contract was awarded to OCCI, Inc. of Fulton. The project calls for a partial replacement of the bridge, nearly identical to what has just completed on the Bridge at Glasgow. Similarly, the bridge will be closed to traffic for up to 12 months. Above, participants break ground for the project.



# D3

## Northeast

### The Front Yard in Bloom

by Chris Shulse, Roadside Manager



Surrounded by woods and a small stream, the Northeast District grounds are a haven for deer and wild turkey.

Therefore, when the management and the grounds staff were trying to reduce total mowing efforts on the approximately 12 acres of lawn in front of the office, wildlife habitat enhancement was one of the goals. Roadside Manager Chris Shulse and his staff attempted to convert part of the front yard to 3.5 acres of native wildflowers and warm season grasses in 2002 - 2003. "Our first attempt resulted in limited success," noted Chris. "We had several wildflower species bloom for the first few years, but maximilian sunflower was the only one that really survived, and we had even less success with our native grasses."



Chris said that trend is starting to change and that indiangrass, big bluestem, and eastern gamma grasses are starting to appear. "We've had a really tough time trying to eliminate non-native cool season grasses like smooth brome and orchardgrass," he said. The cool season grasses grow during the fall, winter, and

spring and can out-compete the native warm season grasses that grow during the summer. Chris and his staff are trying to turn the tide by selective herbicide applications and additional wildflower and grass seed applied to the original



conversion area. Additionally, another 4.5 acres of the front yard was converted this summer with 10 - 12 species of wildflowers and two short growing native grass species. When completed, the wildflower and native grasses should cover nearly eight acres of the grounds and consist of 25 - 30 species. Chris explained that both MoDOT and the wildlife are already benefiting. "This is part of our efforts to 'go green,' and we've substantially reduced staff time, resources, and fuel associated with mowing the front yard," he said. In addition to the deer and turkey, MoDOT staff have seen large flocks of goldfinches and grassland sparrows feeding on seeds, a covey of quail, and migrating monarch butterflies that grab a meal of nectar from the bright yellow and red plains coreopsis. So next time you visit the northeast district office, take a moment to check out the scenery. In addition to beautiful flowers, you might just catch a glimpse of the wildlife that makes our grounds so special.



Northeast District Roadside Manager Chris Shulse checks on the coreopsis blooming in the district office's "front yard."

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### Around the District



Several maintenance building crews teamed up on Route 47 near Cuivre River State Park to construct turn lanes for an entrance to a new school in Lincoln County. The crews laid new asphalt, then went over the entire area with a chip seal to "make a new canvas to paint the stripes on" as one employee said.



Tom Fennessey, Central Office soils and geology, and Lydia Brownell, district geotechnical specialist, use an inclinometer to check the status of a hillside on Route 79 north of Louisiana. Last year, the road cracked and started to slide. MoDOT quickly repaired the slide, and the area continues to be monitored. The inclinometer measures the amount of movement along the hillside.



The management team had a great turnout for their quarterly Adopt-A-Highway cleanup. The team has a section of U.S. 61 in front of the district office. Treasures found this time included a styrofoam cooler by Sherri McGregor and a rap CD, without scratches, by Dave Silvester.

### Drivin' Clean at 16 Campaign for Safe Driving



A surprise present on your birthday is something EVERYONE enjoys, and this year, new drivers registered in the NE Regional Blueprint's Sweet 16 Birthday Bash - Drivin' Clean at 16, will get a nice surprise in the mail. By partnering with a local television station, the Blueprint Committee is offering parents the opportunity for their soon-to-be new driver to receive a present on or before their birthday. "We want to engage parents to share the importance of safe driving habits as

their teen takes to the road," said Marisa Brown, community relations manager. The package contains several Arrive Alive items, as well as fun "tips" on saving gas, rules of the road, and insurance information. The promotion is online only, for now, and includes a link to a newly created Facebook page, just for the Drivin' Clean program. Marisa and her staff worked with their college intern, Chris, to develop the materials for the program. At the end of each month, teens registered will be entered into a drawing for a \$25 gas card, donated by Ayers Oil, Inc. "The support for this program has been overwhelming, and we hope to extend it next year," Marisa added. The program is available only to Missouri residents living in the 13 counties in the Northeast Region, and the teen must turn 16 between November 1, 2009 and April 30, 2010.



# D4

## Kansas City Area

### Blue Parkway Interchange Now Complete

by Kerri Lewis



MoDOT, city, and state officials cut the ribbon to signify the completion of Phase Two for the improvements to the I-470 and Route 50 Interchange.

Recently, MoDOT and officials from the City of Lee's Summit and the state gathered at the corner of Blue Parkway and the eastbound I-470 ramp in Lee's Summit for a ribbon-cutting celebration to celebrate the completed Blue Parkway Half-Diamond Interchange. This second phase of improvements for the I-470/Route

50 Interchange will help lessen congestion and improve safety through the highly traveled area.

The I-470/Route 50 Interchange is the only major freeway-to-freeway junction in the southeastern metropolitan area. Originally designed and built in the late 1970s, this cloverleaf interchange was able to adequately serve

Lee's Summit's suburban growth until the mid 1980s.

Responding to the growing congestion problems at the interchange in the mid-to-late 1990s, the City of Lee's Summit conducted traffic impact studies. Data obtained from this study, combined with data provided by the US 50 Corridor Study, led both city and MoDOT officials to conclude that significant interchange modifications were needed.

Improvements were complete last year on the first phase of this project. The half-diamond interchange at Pryor Road opened to traffic mid summer 2008, improving traffic operations at the junction of I-470 and Route 50. Ultimately, connector roads spanning Routes 50 and 350 will join the two completed half-diamond interchanges at Pryor Road and Blue Parkway on both sides of I-470, creating a Split-Diamond Interchange configuration. The entire project is scheduled for completion in Summer 2010.

Beth Wright, D4 District Engineer, shared the importance that this improvement means for motorists in the area.



Representative Paul LeVota spoke highly of the work MoDOT has been doing for the Kansas City area.



Connector road under construction will span Route 50 and connect Pryor Road and Blue Parkway.

## Listen up! 71 Corridor Podcasts Delivers the Facts

by Michele Compton

D4 is taking project updates to a whole new level: video. Motorists along this corridor have sent in numerous questions and inquiries and the number one question is: Why so many projects at one time?

In this debut video, Perry Allen, Construction and Materials Engineer, explains why two years of construction pain is better than six years of construction headaches.

This is the first in a series of two-minute podcasts and covers all three projects and the overall construction time line. Current construction includes:

- Reconstruction of the Route 150 interchange at Route 71 includes removal and replacement of the Route

71 bridges over Route 150. On track to be complete by mid-2010. This project is \$21 million.

- The 163rd Street interchange, which serves traffic coming from Route Y in Cass County, will be reconstructed in the next two years by adding wider ramps and bridges. This \$11 million cost share with Belton will be complete in early 2010.
- The widening of Route 150 from just east of Route 71 in Grandview to just west of Route 291 in Lee's Summit also has begun. The eight-mile-long project will lower hills, fill valleys and provide two 11-foot-wide lanes in each direction. Complete by late 2011, this project costs \$38 million.

The series of podcasts is just one of several social media tools the district is using to reach a wide audience of drivers. MoDOT Kansas City's facebook page boasts 1,300 fans and more than 700 followers on MoDOT\_KC on Twitter. D4 also uses YouTube and Blogger to keep a finger on the pulse of transportation questions.

For more information, review the 71 Corridor Web site at <http://www.modot.org/kansascity> or follow us on Facebook, Twitter or YouTube.



Perry Allen, District Construction and Materials Engineer, explains to the traveling public and motorists in the area about the work going on along Route 71.

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# D5

## Central

### Central District Employees Prep for Winter Weather

by Holly Dentner

No one can predict what winter will bring to Central Missouri this year, but we do know one thing for sure: we will be prepared for whatever happens.

The colder than normal temperatures during the first two weeks of October coincided with the district’s annual preparation for winter and reminded us that the snow and ice may not be too far away.

Maintenance workers have mounted plows and spreaders to their trucks, calibrating the equipment and checking that everything will operate smoothly when the winter weather arrives.

“We check every piece of equipment as though the snow was going to fall within the next day,” said Maintenance Superintendent Mike Belt. “If there are problems, we can address them now instead of dealing with them when a storm hits.”

Employees must prepare themselves as well. All maintenance employees, including supervisors, were tested in October on their abilities to drive and maintain equipment.

“Every maintenance employee must pass a written exam, a ‘pre-trip’ vehicle inspection and a driving course,” said Belt. “If there are any deficiencies in



Shaun Schmitz

Snow flies from the plow as crews work on Route 54 in Cal-laway County last February.

any part of their testing, we arrange for additional training so those employees can safely perform their duties when the time comes.”

New in the district this year is Geomelt, a product made of beet juice that helps cut down on the amount of salt needed on roadways. The beet juice is mixed with salt and used as a pretreatment to enhance the salt’s performance. Other districts have used Geomelt in previous years and the Central District hopes it proves useful in mid-Missouri too.

Maintenance crews aren’t the only employees preparing for winter weather. Central District employees who maintain the customer service center during winter weather have also attended refresher training for taking calls, communicating with the field via the radio system and updating the traveler map.

“Motorists depend on us in winter weather,” said Belt. “We work hard to make sure we’re ready to keep our state routes clear and safe for travel.”

### Hearing Gathers Public Input for Route 50 Relocation in Osage County

Another high impact project in mid-Missouri is moving through the public hearing process, allowing MoDOT to gather public comments on the proposed design before construction begins.

The new project is the relocation of U.S. Route 50 in Osage County, and the public hearing for the project was held on Oct. 8, 2009, in Loose Creek. Approximately 125 people attended to review MoDOT’s plan to relocate seven miles of Route 50, from the Route 50/63 interchange to west of Linn.

The new highway would go from a two-lane route to a four-lane divided highway, increasing traffic capacity and improving safety. The proposed design places the new highway just south of the existing Route 50.



Kristin Gerber

Transportation Project Manager Jason Vanderfeltz discusses the new highway plans with an Osage County resident.

The public hearing process helps MoDOT communicate with property owners and others who might be affected by the project.

“In this case, we want feedback about the detailed design plans, how the intersections will connect existing roads, and whether or not it’s the best fit for the community and the motorists who will use the route,” said Jason Vanderfeltz, transportation project manager.

The project is estimated to cost \$30 million for construction and could begin in late 2012. It would take approximately 18 months to construct the new highway.



Kristin Gerber

Senior Highway Designer Jerry Nilges describes one of the intersections on the new Route 50.

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### Groundbreaking Held for U.S. Route 65 in Lincoln

More than 70 people gathered in Lincoln on Oct. 5 to celebrate the beginning of a project that will increase capacity and improve safety for motorists in Benton County.

MoDOT officially broke ground on the U.S. Route 65 widening project, which will expand Route 65 to five lanes through the city of Lincoln. The \$3.8 million project extends for two miles, from south of Route HH to north of Route H.

Work on the Route 65 corridor started in 2005, when MoDOT began a study of the route to determine what improvements should be made and what environmental impacts those improvements might have. The study was completed in 2007 and design work began soon after.

Lehman Construction of California, Mo. is the contractor for the work.



Holly Dentner

Members of the Lincoln High School Choir performed two numbers during the ceremony on Oct. 5.

Work on this portion of Route 65 is scheduled to be complete by fall 2010. Additional projects to widen Route 65 north and south of Lincoln are scheduled to begin next summer.



Cathy Morrison

Benton County commissioners and mayors from Lincoln and Warsaw joined State Sen. Delbert Scott and District Engineer Roger Schwartze to turn the first shovel on the Route 65 project.



# D6

## St. Louis Area

### MoDOT Shows St. Louis the Importance of Child Passenger Safety

by Falon McCain

About 500 people recently visited the District 6 SHOW ME Safety Fair to learn more about safety and health practices. Fifty volunteers and 26 vendors assisted MoDOT during the safety event. Among MoDOT's employees were Phillip Ruffus, senior geotechnical specialist, and Stacy Hoener, risk management technician. Both District 6 team members participated with the Child Protective Seat (CPS) program.

Hoener got involved with CPS because she thought it would be "a great way to

passengers would experience if they were in a crash and weren't wearing their safety belt. Sgt. Al Nothum of the Missouri State Highway Patrol conducted the Convincer demonstrations for the fairgoers. The Convincer is an important learning tool for educating motorists to buckle up.

Another big hit was MoDOT's Arrive Alive station. Kids of all ages attempted to shoot hoops while wearing "drunk goggles" at the booth. The goggles distort your perception and simulate what



Stacy Hoener shows a St. Louis parent how to properly buckle the child passenger seat in her vehicle.

help somebody."

"I'm a mother of two," said Hoener, "so educating mothers on how to install safety seats just seemed like the right thing to do. I'd do it again and again."

Ruffus, co-coordinator of CPS, was excited about this year's large participation and educating St. Louis motorists on the importance of child passenger safety.

"We got all these new people involved and the kids left the fair safer," said Ruffus. "Overall, I was particularly pleased with this event."

One of the biggest attractions at the fair was the safety belt Convincer, a crash simulation machine. It demonstrates the impact

a person under the influence would see and how their motor skills would be impaired.

Fairgoers and MoDOT employees thought the "event went well," said Sonja Vauters, right of way technician. Volunteers from MoDOT and SafeKids checked 170 car seats for safety regulations and gave away 149 car seats. MoDOT also gave away 56 bike helmets.



Jermyn Johnson performs a safety inspection on a child passenger seat.

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### MoDOT Employee Walking To Benefit Fallen Workers' Memorial

by Kara Price and Jack Wang



Jim and Theo Feeney walked 87.2 miles on the Katy Trail from Weldon Spring to Jefferson City in honor of the Fallen Workers' Memorial.

Jim Feeney, a MoDOT maintenance crew leader, is constantly outdoors for his job at the Weldon Spring maintenance facility in District 6. But during the weekend of Oct. 17-20, Jim and his wife, Theo, were outdoors for another reason entirely.

Jim took extra steps to raise awareness for work zone safety and pay tribute to his fellow workers who have been killed in the line of duty. Jim used personal time to walk 87.2 miles of the Katy Trail from Weldon Spring to Jefferson City to encourage private sponsorships for a memorial honoring fallen MoDOT employees. He also wanted to remind motorists to slow down and pay attention when driving in work zones.

"I'm bringing up awareness and if employees want to make donations, a dollar donation, that's great," said Jim. "If they wanted to pledge by a mile, that's fantastic."

Jim says for a long time he's wanted to make a difference working at MoDOT. Whether it's stressing safety in the work zone for both his co-workers and the traveling public, or knowing the satisfaction of a job well done, Jim wanted to do his part as an employee of the St. Louis district.

"It's not enough for me to go to work and get a paycheck for what I do, but like I said, I wanted to think outside of the building," said Jim.

He thought of walking from Weldon Spring to Jefferson City a year ago, but it wasn't until the campaign began to raise funds for the MoDOT Fallen Workers' Memorial that his idea for a walk fueled the discussion with his wife.

"That's Jim," said Theo. "This is normal because he likes to make a difference."

Theo is a certified Pilates trainer and teaches fitness at St. Charles Community College. When Jim approached his wife with the idea for the walk, she asked to join, and in turn, began training Jim for the challenge by putting him on a marathon training regimen.

"The challenge is the extent of the walk," said Jim. "I mean, we're mentally and physically prepared for it, so I don't think there's anything that's going to slow us down."

The Feeneys tackled about 20 miles each day during the trek. They had walked the long way knowing the employees at District 6 were rooting them on.

"We've been getting so much positive feedback from people, they're just like 'go for it,'" said Theo.

"I've been getting a lot of support throughout MoDOT from my co-workers and my supervisors at District 6 where everyone is behind us 100 percent," said Jim. "I can't say enough about that because they're really behind me."

Since 1946, 128 MoDOT employees have been killed in the line of duty and plans are under way to create a statewide memorial just to the west of MoDOT's Central Office near the capitol in Jefferson City to honor these men and women. The memorial will be totally funded by private donations.

Anyone wishing to make a contribution to the memorial fund can make a check payable to State Highway & Transportation Employees Association of Missouri and mail it to: District 7 Highway Credit Union, Attn: Dave B. Taylor, 3901 East 32nd Street, Suite A, Joplin, Mo. 64804.

For more information on work zone safety and the memorial, visit [www.modot.org/workzones](http://www.modot.org/workzones).



D7

Southwest

## Cameras Going Up Along I-44 Corridor

by Lori Marble

As part of a large contract that includes the entire I-44 corridor, 10 closed-

circuit TV cameras are being installed in the Southwest District. The cameras

are used to monitor traffic, allowing MoDOT to view traffic congestion caused by accidents and construction work zones. Each camera will have about a one-mile span, barring sight obstructions.

This real-time information is used to update messages on message boards and can be used to modify work zones and to reroute traffic around an accident. The video feed is accessible to authorized MoDOT personnel only and is not recorded.



Travis Bard

Crews with James Drew erect a camera pole on I-44.



Travis Bard

Employees with James Drew set a camera pole.

The James Drew Corporation was awarded the contract at \$1,405,657.31 and must complete the work along the corridor by March 1, 2010. Workers should be finished with District 7's

section before December. No American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding is involved with this project.

## Enhancement Funds Create Trails for Public Use

by Eric Kellstadt

The City of Carl Junction recently completed work on the Thom's Station Trail pedestrian bridge, which was funded through MoDOT's Transportation Enhancement program. The Thom's Station Trail is a Rail-to-Trails project that uses abandoned railroad right of way located through the city of Carl Junction.

In 2007 the city was awarded \$294,408 for the design and construction of phase 2 of the Thom's Station Trail. This phase included an additional segment of the trail and a nearly 425-foot pedestrian bridge. The city was able to use existing railroad bridge piers from a bridge that was removed many years ago.

Transportation Enhancement program to help fund the construction of trails.

Phase 3 of the project will receive ARRA funds.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new pedestrian bridge is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 7, in Carl Junction.

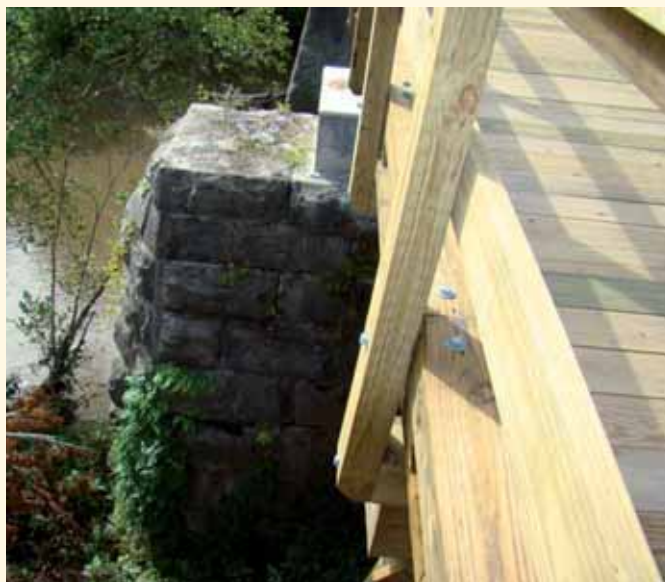


Eric Kellstadt

The Thom's Station Trail pedestrian bridge was completed recently.

According to the Joplin Trails Coalition, the bridge is the longest of its type in Missouri.

Trail projects are popular in southwest Missouri, and several communities and organizations have taken advantage of the



Eric Kellstadt

The Thom's Station Trail pedestrian bridge used existing railroad bridge piers from a former bridge.

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### Employee Fairs Replace Fall Meetings

This year District 7 shook the fall benefits meetings up a bit by conducting employee fairs complete with booths and information other than benefits.

Presentations included incident response, pavement management, Next Generation Desktop and insurance.

During breaks employees visited booths for flu shots and blood pressure checks and information on the Employees' Association, Employee Advisory Extension Council, Safe & Sound bridge program, Charitable Campaign, Coalition for Roadway Safety, employee directory photo updates and MoDOT Good News.



# D8

## Springfield Area

### Springfield Getting Its Second Diverging Diamond Interchange

by Bob Edwards

Springfield's second diverging diamond interchange is under construction at National Avenue and James River Freeway (Route 60). The project is designed to improve traffic flow and safety along the congested corridor with many businesses and medical facilities, including Cox South Hospital.

The National Avenue and James River Freeway interchange on Springfield's south side is a top candidate for a diverging diamond interchange.

"I'm totally confident this configuration will provide a great level of service for many years into the future," District Engineer Kirk Juranas said.

The first-in-the-nation diverging diamond opened in June at Kansas Expressway and I-44 on Springfield's north side and has worked well.

District 8 project manager Don Saiko, who designed the first diverging diamond project, suggested the new configuration as an option for National Avenue and the James River Freeway. He worked on the project with city of Springfield staffers and EFK Moen, the engineering consulting firm hired by the city. "Tweaks" added at Kansas Expressway and I-44, including a traf-

fic signal for right turns from the off-ramps, were adapted into the National/James River Freeway design.

"We incorporated our lessons learned," Saiko said.

When the project is completed in August 2010, National Avenue will have six lanes across the bridge – being widened 15 feet on each side – with two through lanes in each direction and separate left-turn lanes onto the freeway. A second right-turn lane will be added to the westbound off-ramp where traffic heading north often backs up to the freeway. An auxiliary lane will be built in each direction on the freeway, connecting the ramps between National and Campbell avenues.

The project includes building a new service road and underpass connecting CoxHealth facilities on both sides of National Avenue.

MoDOT is partnering with the City of Springfield and CoxHealth to share the \$9.7 million cost for construction, engineering and right of way.

Prime contractor is Emery Sapp & Sons of Columbia.

### Two D8 Projects Win National Honors

by Angela Eden

Two high-profile construction projects completed in 2009 have earned District 8 national recognition for excellence.

The projects are the Route 13/I-44 Diverging Diamond Interchange in Springfield, opened in June, and the I-44 Welcome Center at Conway, opened in May after the former rest area had been closed for a year for construction.

The Missouri Valley chapter of the Institute of Transportation Engineers

(MOVITE) cited the Route 13/I-44 reconfiguration for its innovative, low-cost design and its effectiveness in reducing congestion and crashes. The award was presented at MOVITE's annual conference Sept. 21 in Springfield.

The Route 66-themed Conway Welcome Center won in the America's Transportation Awards competition because the project was completed a month ahead of schedule and came in \$2 million under budget. The award, presented in July in Grand Rapids, MI, is sponsored by AASHTO, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and AAA.

"Innovation has its rewards," District Engineer Kirk Juranas said, referring to the diverging diamond design and the historic Route 66 atmosphere.

"Talkin' Transportation"  
Call-In Radio Show

KWTO 560 AM, Springfield

10-10:50 a.m. Wednesdays

[radiospringfield.com](http://radiospringfield.com)

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1  
Bob Edwards



2  
Bob Edwards



3



4  
Angela Eden



5  
Bob Edwards

### D8 at Work

1. Bradleyville Senior Maintenance Workers Steve Clevenger, left, and Robin Koenig repair a sickle bar while mowing along Route 76 east of Forsyth.

2. A survey crew checks elevations needed to monitor an uplift in the pavement on Route 65 south of Kearney Street in Springfield. Working at dusk in the median with the southbound left lane closed are, from left, Land Surveyor Travis Thiemann (holding flashlight), Land Survey Supervisor Rick McCallister and Land Surveyors Jason Worley and Brad Brake.

3. Maintenance crews from the Lebanon, Dove, Marshfield and Nebo shops lay extensive patches along Laclede County Route FF near Stoutland. The road was closed for two days except for local traffic to complete the work.

4. Lebanon Intermediate Maintenance Worker Chad King spots one of the dump trucks working on the Laclede County Route FF patching project.

5. Rebuilding a mile-long section of Webster County Route NN south of Diggins are Seymour Senior Maintenance Worker Justin Watson, operating the grinder; Seymour Seasonal Maintenance Worker Chris Dengler, walking to guide the equipment; and Mountain Grove Senior Maintenance Worker Tony Dawson, running a grader. To strengthen and stabilize the roadway, the old asphalt and rock was ground up, mixed with cement and fly ash and reapplied, then given a chip-seal surface.



# D9

## South Central

### South Central Right of Way Specialists Deliver

Realty to Roads Project Director Gregory Wood recently recognized the South Central Right of Way department for delivering outstanding results in the disposal of excess property in fiscal year 2009. D9 was responsible for more than 21 percent of all excess properties conveyed in fiscal 2009, more than any other district, with a total of 48 parcels sold.

According to Right of Way Manager Steve Shelton, MoDOT placed an increased emphasis on disposing of excess property in fiscal 2009, and his staff was prepared to meet the challenge. "I'm proud of how the Right of Way team stepped up and embraced this challenge. The results are evident. I'm also proud of D9 for leading the state and setting the bar for others to follow," he said.

Shelton said the key to the departments' success was a shift in focus by Right of Way

specialists from acquisition to property management. This shift included the disposal of assets and increased use of property auctions. Although auctions have been used in the past, some specialists in D9 had not used them before.

The focus on excess property disposal resulted in \$4.3 million generated statewide, and \$228,000 for the South Central District. Shelton said he's pleased that the Right of Way department was able to generate revenue that will come back to the district and be used on the roadway.



Intermediate Right of Way Specialist Eric Kaut, Administrative Professional Carolyn Collins, Senior Right of Way Specialist Tamara Gregory, Certified Appraiser Brad Newberry, Certified Appraiser Lisa-Durnell and Right of Way Manager Steve Shelton.

### South Central Crews Prepare for Mother Nature

Winter may be coming in a little early this year, but D9 crews are ready for the challenge. Participants in this year's Snow Academy prepared for winter work through preventive maintenance, pre-trip vehicle inspections, hands-on snowplow and loader skills exercises, and completing a written exam.

The exercises required the drivers to plow in a straight line, through obstacles, back into narrow spaces, and clear curbs. District Safety and Health Manager Darren Petrus said the training is intended to provide employees with an opportunity to sharpen their skills before snow and ice fall. "We want each of the 261 employees who participated in the training to know they possess the needed skills to navigate snow and ice covered roadways safely. It's important that our employees have the tools they need to complete the job safely and make it home after the roads are cleared," he said.

This year, the training was held in smaller segments. Employees completed pre-trip inspections at their home building before participating in the driving skills course.

In D9, 108 employees received a perfect score on their written test this year, two employees received a perfect score on the truck course, and 55 employees received a perfect score on the loader course. Senior Maintenance Worker Roy Gaither from Success was the only South Central employee to receive a perfect score on both the truck and loader course.



### D9 Employee Fairs Under Way

Fall employee fairs are in full swing in D9. The format introduced last year in the South Central District was such a success that it was repeated again this year. The format aims to provide employees with a comfortable environment to ask questions and encourage discussion.

After a brief introduction, groups of 15 employees listened to presentations from management and staff members. This year's presentation topics include:

- Charitable Donations
- Benefits
- Minor Roads Initiative
- Tracker and Best Practices
- Roadside Management
- Winter Geomelt (Beet Juice) Program

After presentations are complete, employees visit booths with representatives for additional information, including: Air Evac Lifeteam, Business and Benefits, Credit Union, Employee Advisory Extension Council, Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety, Solutions at Work, State of Missouri Deferred Compensation Plan, Transportation Employee Association of Missouri (TEAM), and the University of Phoenix.

The fairs provide employees with in-depth information on the changes, programs and initiatives that affect them.



Employees listen as District Maintenance Engineer Chris Rutledge talks about Tracker and best practices during one of their sessions.

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# D10

## Southeast

### Portageville Maintenance Crew ‘Pulls Together’ to Help Fellow Co-Worker

by Nicole Thieret

MoDOT’s values include being one team because we all share the same mission. Recently, the District 10 Portageville Shed lived this value by helping an injured co-worker.

Portageville Maintenance Worker Benjamin “Joey” Cummins had been building a home for him and his two young children, Susan and Dakota. During the process Cummins had been using a nail gun that malfunctioned and shot a nail through his hand, breaking a bone in the process. Michael Terrett, a Portageville Senior Maintenance Worker, was there when the accident happened.

“Mike saw what happened, wrapped up my hand and took me to the hospital,” said Cummins. “I guess you could say they have been here for me through the toughest times, and I really appreciate everything they have done.”

Not only did progress on the house stop at that time, but Cummins was not able to work for six weeks. Prior to his injury, his co-workers had been helping with the construction of the home, but immediately stepped up their efforts when they learned of his injury.

MoDOT co-workers from the Portageville shed assisted in building the house. Working evenings, weekends and holidays, employees took turns helping Cummins get back on his feet. Maintenance Worker DeMarcus Thatch, Sr. Maintenance Worker Charles Carter, Maintenance Crew Leader James Stafford, Sr. Maintenance Worker Michael Terrett, and Regional Maintenance Supervisor Linda Lee helped lay the pad, studded walls, added the roof and hung windows and doors.

Today, Cummins is back to work and progress continues to be made on his new home. He is finished with the wiring and insulation, with plans to begin the duct work for the ceiling and begin hanging drywall.

“I’m amazed that even the employees who didn’t have much building experience came together to help me out,” said Cummins. “My oldest daughter is amazed and asks me how I have so many friends, while my youngest is anxious to have the top floor of the home as her play area. I feel blessed and couldn’t ask for a better work group.”



Working evenings, weekends and holidays, members of the Portageville maintenance crew help an injured co-worker lay the pad to his new home.

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### Around the Southeast District



D10 held the 2009 Winter Snow Academy Training this September in preparation for the winter months ahead. Scores from each training session were kept, with the following employees placing in the overall top five: 1st Place - Patton Sr. Maintenance Worker Scott Henderson; 2nd Place - Malden Sr. Maintenance Worker Thomas Moore; 3rd Place - Brazeau Maintenance Supervisor Clifford Stueve; 4th Place - Fredericktown Sr. Maintenance Worker Norman Clark; 5th Place - Park Hills Maintenance Worker Giles King.

Members of the Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety, along with the Highway Patrol, manned an Arrive Alive booth and the Seatbelt Convincer during the Southeast Missouri District Fair. Sr. Traffic Office Assistant Lisa Cook, at right, was one of the MoDOT employees that volunteered to assist during the fair.



Nearly 100 Arrive Alive supporters gathered to walk in the Southeast Missouri District Fair Parade in Cape Girardeau.



Traffic Studies Specialist Seth Bollinger was one of the MoDOT employees who worked the MoDOT booth at the Tour of Missouri race in Cape Girardeau. D10 also had booths at the Farmington and Ste. Genevieve portions of the race.



Sr. Human Resources Specialist Lisa Kenley, along with other MoDOT employees, held the “2009 Bring Your Children to Work Day” in D10.



# Connections

The mission of *Connections* is to be a monthly source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide. It is distributed to MoDOT employees and retirees.

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Additional copies are available upon request. Suggestions, questions and comments are always welcome.



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# MoDOT Honored for Technology and Customer Service

Gov. Jay Nixon presented MoDOT with two awards on Oct. 15 – one for the department’s online Traveler Information Map and the other for the department’s use of the Web to conduct a virtual public meeting on the future of Interstate 70.

The Governor’s Award for Quality and Productivity recognizes teams that excel in the areas of excellence, efficiency, innovation, technology, process improvement, customer service and employee development.

MoDOT’s Traveler Information Map, located at [www.modot.org](http://www.modot.org), has revolutionized communication with Missouri travelers. It offers a one-stop location for information on weather-related road conditions, work zones, flooding and incidents on major routes. Hundreds of thousands of Missouri travelers use the service regularly to make travel decisions before they leave home. It’s

possible the map has saved lives by keeping people from traveling during hazardous conditions.

MoDOT and its partner, HNTB, an engineering firm, held Missouri’s first-ever electronic meeting to meaningfully and cost-effectively get input from the public on rebuilding Interstate 70 with lanes separating cars and trucks. This innovative public involvement tool is believed to be only the second such online meeting in the country. Due to this innovative approach, up to 10 times as many people attended the online public meeting than had attended previous face-to-face meetings. MoDOT has since used virtual meetings for other projects as a way to broaden the agency’s outreach efforts and get more people involved in its decision-making process.



Shaun Schmitz

Clockwise from top: Kelvin Simmons, Bob Brendel, Cheryl Richey, Matt Hiebert, Matt Burcham, Betty Burry, Michael DeMent and Kevin Keith. Simmons, the commissioner of administration, presented the others with the Governor’s Award for Quality and Productivity on Oct. 15.

## Pool Cars Start Drive for Change

by Kristi Jamison

The color of the leaves isn’t the only thing that is changing this fall. Soon, the first of many adjustments will take place in an effort to reduce the amount of money MoDOT pays out for Central Office facilities in Jefferson City. The first change involves the location of our pool vehicles.

On November 2, all pool vehicles will be relocated to the parking lot at 830 MoDOT Drive, instead of inside the facility. The location of Travel Services staff and computers used to checkout pool vehicles will remain the same for now, but the way you get to them will change by the end of the month. Construction inside the building will prohibit employees from entering the garage on the north side of the build-

ing. Instead, you will need to enter at the east side of the building, where Procurement staff used to be located. Maps will be posted inside the building and on the Travel Services Intranet site to help direct you through the building.

How to get to the checkout point and your pool vehicle isn’t the only change, however. As much cooler winter weather arrives, the vehicle you check out will not be as warm as it used to be when it was stored inside. You may need to spend a little extra time warming up your vehicle and scraping your windshield in ice and snow. Also since vehicles will be detailed off site, the cars will not be cleaned as often as

in the past. Please be kind to the next driver and remove all trash.

When it comes to parking, you can still leave your personal car at the building when picking up a pool vehicle, but now space will be much more limited. If you will be carpooling in a pool vehicle, please urge your group to meet and park at another location and take just one personal car to 830 MoDOT Drive to help ease your ability to park.

The relocation of the pool vehicles will pave the way for other internal changes, such as the relocation of the Central Office distribution center. This will, in turn, make room for new office space that will eventually be used to consolidate employees from other locations.

Unfortunately, these changes will be a little more inconvenient for you, but the department, as a whole, will benefit in the end. Over time, this transformation will save MoDOT a substantial sum of money, because we will be able to stop leasing a few other facilities in town. More details about these changes will be shared in future articles and through other forms of communications as information becomes available.